

THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
of
THE PARISH OF CHELSFIELD
for the year ended
31st DECEMBER 2024
to be held on Thursday 22nd May 2025
in the Brass Crosby Room of the church of St. Martin of Tours, Chelsfield
immediately following the Annual Vestry Meeting at
7.30pm

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st April 2024**
- 3. Matters arising**
- 4. Rector's and Associate Rector's Reports**
- 5. Annual Reports:**
 - (a) Electoral Roll**
 - (b) Annual Report of the PCC**
 - (c) Financial Report for the year ending 31st December 2024**
 - (d) Safeguarding Report**
 - (e) Churchwardens' Fabric Report**
 - (f) Well Hill Report**
 - (g) Deanery and Diocesan Synod Reports**
 - (h) Other Reports**
- 6. Elections and Appointments:**
 - (a) Election of PCC Members**
 - (b) Appointment of Independent Examiner**
- 7. Any Other Business**

THE PARISH OF CHELSFIELD
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
held on SUNDAY, 21st APRIL 2024 at 4.30pm
in the Brass Crosby Room of the church of St. Martin of Tours

Those in attendance:

Rev'd Susan Atkinson-Jones (Chairman and Rector), Rev'd Michael Gentry (Associate Rector), Norman Bailey, Karen Barter, Gwen Bowen, Christine Cookson (Electoral Roll Officer), Caroline Davis, Barry Foale (Treasurer), Paul Gosling, Anne Green, Kenneth I'Anson (Reader), Anne Ireland (Secretary), Jackie McCann (Sacristan), Steve McCann (PSO), Norman McDonnell, Wendy McDonnell, Chris Mead, Marion Mills, Jim Rooke, Philippa Rooke (Churchwarden), Jonathan Sargant, Mary Tozer, Linda Tucker, Gillian Vernon, Tony Vernon, Angela Wilkins. (26)

The meeting followed immediately on from the Annual Vestry Meeting, commencing at 4.40pm.

1. **Apologies** were received from Rev'd Martin Hayward, Susan Bennett, Michael Choong, Ivy Clark, Tony and Val Hemmings, Gordon Ireland

2. **Minutes of the previous APCM held on 30th April 2023**

The minutes of the previous APCM were approved unanimously.

3. **Matters arising**

The state of some of the graves in the churchyard had been raised in the two previous APCMs, with concerns over unsuitable decorations being put on some graves. It was suggested that a brief document be prepared to give to bereaved families when a burial service was being organised, setting out what were permissible as grave decorations. Steve McCann offered to draft a document for discussion by the PCC.

4. **Rector's and Associate Rector's Reports**

The reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. Rev'd Susan read out a supplementary report which was added to the record of meeting papers.

Rev'd Susan described the work of both Chelsfield PCC and the PCC of Green Street with Pratts Bottom in identifying areas to work on both within the individual parishes and as common aims across the benefice. Mission Action Plans had been drawn up and adopted by the separate PCCs. They showed objectives, action plans, leaders, resources and how to evaluate progress. They would be updated from time to time as appropriate.

A suggestion was made that the practice of sending anniversary cards to baptism families could be resumed, to encourage continued involvement in the church. The IknowChurch programme could provide reminders or anniversaries. After discussion it was agreed that it was a good idea, but that volunteers were needed to take on the task. Rev'd Susan asked that any volunteers contact her after the meeting.

Rev'd Michael gave a brief report on Messy Church, which was proving successful. He noted that there was a need for a few more volunteers to help share the work. He emphasised that Messy Church was open to all, not just families, and urged people to attend a session to see how it worked.

5. Annual Reports

All reports had been circulated prior to the meeting and remained available on the church website.

(a) Electoral Roll report

There were 105 names on the Electoral Roll after the recent revision. Rev'd Susan thanked Christine Cookson for her work as Electoral Roll Officer.

A new Electoral Roll would be prepared in 2025, in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. This would mean that every person currently on the Electoral Roll would be asked to complete a new application. People would be contacted in good time in early 2025 and invited to apply to be entered on the new Roll.

(b) Annual Report of the PCC

The report had been approved by the PCC at their meeting on 21st March. No questions were raised. Formal adoption of the report was proposed by Paul Gosling, seconded by Ken l'Anson and agreed unanimously.

(c) Financial Report

The annual accounts for the year ending 31st December 2023 had been independently examined and approved by the PCC at their meeting on 21st March. No questions were raised. Formal adoption of the Financial Report was proposed by Steve McCann, seconded by Philippa Rooke and agreed unanimously.

Barry Foale gave a summary of the general position of the parish finances. Costs were constantly rising, and each year was a struggle to break even. The parish was dependent on the generous donations of parishioners, which to date had allowed the parish to run without having to draw extensively on reserves.

Rev'd Susan thanked Barry for all his work as Treasurer.

(d) Safeguarding Report

There were no questions. Rev'd Susan noted that the Diocese placed great emphasis on safeguarding, and it was for everyone, not just members of the PCC or people who ran groups. Steve McCann noted that it was good practice for all sidesmen to undertake basic training.

Rev'd Susan thanked Steve for his work during the year as Parish Safeguarding Officer.

(e) Churchwardens' Fabric Report

In answer to a question, Philippa Rooke explained that the old King James bible was kept in a special carrier box that had been made by Norman Bailey and was placed on the altar in the St. John Chapel. If people wished to read from the King James bible at services, they should ask before the service for it to be moved to the lectern. After discussion, it was agreed that there was no rule about which bible version any reader should use. It was a matter of personal choice, unless the minister giving the sermon had reason to refer to a particular translation.

A question was raised concerning the progress of the spire contract. Philippa Rooke informed the meeting that the Spire sub-committee was in pre-contract discussions with the preferred contractor. The recent bat survey had identified the presence of one bat, which meant that there was a process to go through in obtaining a licence for the work from Natural England. The contractor was experienced in working in locations with bats so it was hoped that there would not be a major hold-up in getting the work done. The work on the external stonework would not be affected. A meeting was scheduled for 23rd April with the contractor to discuss the timescale. The fundraising campaign has been successful, thanks to the work of Steve McCann and the Spire Committee, but further funds were still required.

There were no other questions on the report. Rev'd Susan thanked the churchwardens for their work during the year.

(f) Well Hill Report

No questions were raised.

(g) Deanery and Diocesan Synod Reports

No questions were raised.

(h) Other Reports

There were no questions on the other reports.

Jackie McCann (Sacristan) asked for more volunteers to act as servers. There were currently only 3 servers, and more were needed to ensure cover at all services.

Rev'd Susan thanked the writers of all the informative reports and all the people involved with the various groups.

6. Elections and Appointments

(a) Election of PCC members

Michael Choong, Jackie McCann, Jonathan Sargent and Paul Venton retired by rotation.

Nominations for membership were received as follows:

- Michael Choong - nominated by Anne Ireland, seconded by Philippa Rooke
- Jackie McCann - nominated by Steve McCann, seconded by Anne Ireland
- Jonathan Sargent - nominated by Paul Gosling, seconded by Gwen Bowen
- Angela Wilkins - nominated by Ken I'Anson, seconded by Wendy McDonnell

All candidates were elected by unanimous vote and welcomed by Rev'd Susan.

(b) Appointment of Independent Examiner

Diane Lewis, Independent Examiner, had expressed concern that she might not be qualified to act in 2024 if the total income of the PCC were to exceed £250,000. In 2023, total income was £230k, though £117k of that had related specifically to the Spire Appeal. Barry Foale was unsure whether the 2024 would exceed £250k, given the further planned fundraising for the Spire Appeal.

Anne Ireland agreed to contact Diane Lewis to check whether she would be willing to act as Independent Examiner provided the total anticipated income for 2024 remained below the £250k. If, later in the year, total income was forecast to exceed that sum, a different Independent Examiner would need to be found and appointed.

7. Any Other Business

Steve McCann noted that Barry Foale had acted as Treasurer for the PCC for 25 years. He had expressed a desire gradually to hand over the work and take a back seat. Chris Mead had kindly offered to start taking over. The process of handover would take several months and there was no strict timetable in mind for Barry to resign as Treasurer and Chris formally to take over.

The meeting expressed its thanks to Barry for all his work over such a long period, and its thanks to Chris for volunteering to take on the role in due course.

There being no other business, Rev'd Susan thanked everyone for attending. The meeting finished with the Grace.

The meeting closed at 5.42pm.

THE PARISH OF CHELSFIELD

APCM - 22nd May 2025

Rector's Report

Having just celebrated Easter, it is wonderful to be reminded of the hope that the gospel of Jesus Christ offers us as we seek to serve the mission and ministry of the Benefice of Chelsfield with Green Street Green and Pratts Bottom. Springtime gifts us the promise of new beginnings, as we observe the beauty of God's creation burst into colourful song and bloom.

In my mind, this is echoed in the life of our worshipping communities. There is much to be thankful to God for over the last APCM year.

In April we finalised our Mission Action Plans for both the Benefice and the Parish and we have been working on the priorities stated within them. There have been several well attended sessions with the clergy including one on the ministry of Welcome and another on Liturgy. In October we welcomed the Rt Rev Simon Burton-Jones, Bishop of Tonbridge to St Mary's for a Deanery Confirmation service when eight candidates from the benefice were confirmed.

Messy Church has grown in strength and continued monthly with the families of all those baptised over the last couple of years invited to the November meeting.

There have been several delightful social gatherings such as a wonderful Anniversary Celebration Service and lunch to mark the 25th Anniversary of both Rev Michael and my ordination to the priesthood and in Chelsfield cream teas, Lent lunches and a fun but challenging Quiz night.

Together as a parish and as a benefice we are strengthening our friendships with one another and our links with those in our communities including welcoming some of our local schools into church and clergy visits too. Our Toddlers group continues to thrive drawing many into St Martin's who may not otherwise do so.

I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone for the energy and enthusiasm that has made all of these activities possible. My deepest gratitude goes to the Ministry team for all that they do throughout the benefice and also to Philippa who dedicates so much time to ensure the smooth running of the parish. A special mention must also go to Barry after stepping down following many years as Treasurer.

Unfortunately, we were unable to move forward with the Spire works in 2024 but this is now on schedule for 2025 and sadly after much thought

and prayer our Memory Café has ceased to operate due to a consistent lack of clients. My thanks go to Jackie and the team who dedicated so much of their time providing companionship and bringing joy to those who attended over the years.

Now as we look forward to 2025 my prayer is that in all our daily lives, our relationships, our work, our service, our worship, and in our times of gathering together, we may know the grace, mercy and peace of God, as we seek to be open to where God is at work, and ready to join in.

Revd Susan Atkinson-Jones
April 2025

THE PARISH OF CHELSFIELD
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING
22nd MAY 2025

ASSOCIATE RECTOR'S REPORT

Messy Church Report 2024

I am pleased to be able to report that it is now over 2 years since we launched Messy Church, and it continues to flourish. I continue co-ordinating Messy Church, and the volunteers are taking more responsibility for individual activities. I would like to thank all the volunteers for giving their time each month and Messy Church would not happen without them. Numbers have settled down averaging 25 - 30 in total (Adults and Children) plus 8 to 10 helpers per session. Since we began 53 families have attended on at least one occasion (Last year it was 40 families) and at nearly every session there has been at least one new family attend. Some families have only attended once, some come occasionally, and others come regularly (I guess this is similar to church attendance generally). We use resource material from the Messy Church Organisation and the themes have been varied and interesting. We have two catering teams who take it in turns to provide the food we offer, and this is usually a two-course meal which everyone attending joins in with. In the past year we have had two significant events. In May 2024, Rochester Diocese ran Messy Cathedral which is Messy Church on a large scale for the whole Diocese. Our volunteers helped to run an activity at this event. More recently in March this year (I know the report is meant to be for 2024, but this deserves a mention!) we held a joint Messy Church/Benefice service combined. Over 85 people attended this all the churches in the benefice together with the Messy Church families. I received positive feedback, and we hope to run this again in the future. I feel positive about the future of Messy Church, but we could do with just a couple more volunteers to cover when our regular volunteers are away. It really is good fun and if you ask any of the volunteers, I am sure they would agree that they enjoy this worthwhile venture.

Please pray that Messy Church continues to flourish.

Rev Michael